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**Office of Legislative Liaison**

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**SUSPENSE**

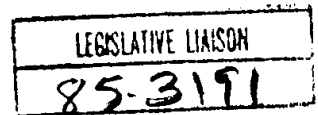
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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503



October 22, 1985

LEGISLATIVE REFERRAL MEMORANDUM

**SPECIAL**

OLL FILE

Recpt #

*Legislation*

TO: Legislative Liaison Officer-

Department of Defense - Windus - 697-1305 (06)  
Central Intelligence Agency  
National Security Council

SUBJECT: State draft testimony on H.R. 3463 - Central  
American Counter-terrorism Act of 1985 for  
Thursday, October 24 hearing.

The Office of Management and Budget requests the views of your agency on the above subject before advising on its relationship to the program of the President, in accordance with OMB Circular A-19.

A response to this request for your views is needed no later than  
10:00 A.M., TOMORROW, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1985.

Questions should be referred to Sue Thau/Tracey Lawler (395-7300).

*Ronald K. Peterson*

RONALD K. PETERSON FOR  
Assistant Director for  
Legislative Reference

Enclosures

cc: J. Eisenhower  
R. Neely

**SPECIAL**

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**The Honorable Michael H. Armacost  
Under Secretary for Political Affairs**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**ON H.R. 3463, THE  
CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTERTERRORISM ACT OF 1985  
October 24, 1985**

Mr. Chairman:

It is a pleasure to appear before you today to testify in support of H.R. 3463, the Administration's proposal for an urgent new program to combat the rising threat of terrorism in Central America. With me today are Deputy Assistant Secretary James Michel, LTG Phillip Gast, and Ambassador Edward Marks.

The Administration is seeking legislative authority and funding to initiate a Central American counterterrorism assistance program. H.R. 3463 would authorize \$54 million for military and civilian counterterrorism assistance for El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Guatemala, and Costa Rica. The bill also authorizes assistance for Belize, although no program for that country is intended at this time.

One-half of the amount requested, \$27 million, will be dedicated to the establishment of a specialized military counterterrorism assistance program to be called the Regional Enhanced Counterterrorism Assistance Program (RECAP). The military counterterrorism assistance program will be administered by the Department of Defense under the authority of chapter 2 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act. We are seeking \$26 million for a Law Enforcement Counterterrorism

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Assistance Program (LECTAP) to be administered by the Department of State under the authority of chapter 8 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act. The bill provides exceptions from the operational constraints on the location of training, and on types and quantities of equipment, that otherwise apply under chapter 8. An additional \$1 million would be allocated to the Secretary of State for a fund to meet the costs of protection for individuals who cooperate with the United States in counterterrorism matters.

#### THE RISING TERRORISM THREAT IN CENTRAL AMERICA

We are confronting a rising terrorist threat in Central America. The return to democratic civilian government in Central America and progress by elected governments in defeating the guerrilla challenge is being met with increasing resort to terrorism as a deliberate tactic by Marxist-led guerrilla groups. We have seen the most blatant terrorist attacks in El Salvador. However, available information also indicates increasing threats against Honduras, Guatemala, and Costa Rica. The possibility of terrorism in Panama poses a threat to strategic U.S. interests there.

The threat, in El Salvador in particular, is changing in character, at least partially because of the success that government military organizations have had in combatting insurgency in the countryside. We have noted over the past year an increasing shift to the use of indiscriminate terrorist

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violence in the cities, often directed against individuals. The tragic murder of four US Marines, two other US citizens and seven other persons in San Salvador last June was the most striking example of this shift in tactics. In addition, 23 mayors and many other officials and citizens of El Salvador have been kidnapped in the past eight months, the most notable being the daughter of President Duarte. We have reason to believe that the pattern in El Salvador may well repeat itself elsewhere in Central America. The new challenge must be met with an adequate response by the US, for the challenge and the terrorism is aimed as much at us as at our friends in the region.

#### POLICY REVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS

In the wake of the June 19 massacre in San Salvador we conducted an intensive review of the political and security situation in the region. We reached several conclusions.

First, passive measures to further improve security of U.S. personnel and facilities, while essential and being taken, are not sufficient unto themselves. When outside the Embassy, U.S. personnel are primarily dependent on the local police for physical security. The police, who should provide the first line of defense, are inadequately trained and equipped to provide such security.

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Second, terrorism is not only a threat to our people and facilities, but also to the survival of nascent and fragile democratic institutions we are supporting. Our objective should be not only to secure the physical safety but also to support the efforts of friendly governments in the region to achieve and maintain a secure environment for democratic reforms and equitable economic development.

Third, we and the local governments are being tested. In the absence of a response, terrorists who have experienced success will do more, their activities will be emulated elsewhere, serious questions will arise as to the policy, will and capability of both the U.S. and local governments, and the political stability of local governments will be undermined. A strong response is needed to show terrorists their tactics will not work and to bolster the position of the local governments.

Fourth, the prohibition on U.S. assistance to public security forces has been partly responsible for the gap that terrorists are taking advantage of. We are assisting the local military forces in combatting insurgency, we are assisting the judicial systems in improving the administration of justice, we are trying to strengthen the economic systems -- we are not, however, doing anything specifically to protect ourselves and the people and governments of the region from wanton terrorism

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by strengthening the counterterrorism capabilities of the police and the military forces. A special program of counterterrorism assistance is needed, together with the ability to provide equipment and training in sizeable amounts rapidly to public security forces.

Fifth, any counterterrorism program that includes assistance to the police should take into careful consideration past U.S. efforts, our overriding human rights concerns and the ability of governments to work to ensure that such assistance will strengthen, rather than weaken, the rule of law and respect for civil liberties. We intend to monitor this program very closely to ensure that counterterrorism is not used as a cover or pretext for repression of free speech or legitimate political activities. It is meant to protect the non-combatant population, particularly in the cities, from criminal violence by terrorists such as bombings, shootings, rocket attacks, kidnappings and hostage taking. This will be part of the training and of the monitoring.

#### PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Let me emphasize here the word assistance. Notwithstanding the threat to U.S. interests, we cannot go into these countries and assume the role of the policeman. Fighting terrorism is a task that only the emerging democracies can do themselves, but we can help.



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The counterterrorism capabilities of the democracies in Central America are very weak. The police have been at the bottom of everyone's priority list. They have been ineligible for the kinds of U.S. assistance that have been effective in professionalizing indigenous armed forces. Local governments have not had the resources or the technical know-how to develop and implement effective counterterrorism programs without outside help.

In considering how to remedy this problem, it is necessary to remember that the problem of terrorism has two dimensions, one military, the other law enforcement. In both cases we are talking about very specialized and specific kinds of assistance. If either is neglected, the other is harmed as well. The trend is to use the police as static guards in a defensive posture while the military take over the task of searching out and pursuing terrorist attackers. This risks creating a more militarized police force and a military establishment that is diverted from its primary mission by an effort to perform law enforcement functions. That is why we have concluded that while the problem of terrorism in Central America must be urgently addressed, it should only be addressed by effective assistance programs which seek to strengthen the abilities of both the police and the military to perform appropriate institutional roles in democratic societies

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THE COUNTERTERRORISM PROPOSAL: RECAP, LECTAP, WITNESS  
PROTECTION FUND

The current counterterrorism capability of the countries' security forces is extremely limited. Although we can supply some training and equipment soon which would greatly increase their present capabilities, the establishment of a competent, self-sustaining counterterrorism force is not an overnight process. We therefore view our proposal as a long-range, multi-year program.

It is important to note that the military forces of these Central American countries currently have the primary security responsibility for defending against terrorism. In one sense, the RECAP part of our overall program is designed to help them deal with the current emergency. In all of these countries, except Belize, we have ongoing institutional arrangements for military consultation, cooperation, and assistance.

Local police forces are less well-developed institutionally, are weaker in terms of trained, equipped personnel, and are desperately lacking in essential equipment such as ammunition, transport, etc. However, we do not have similar established relationships with them, although a

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beginning is underway through ATA in Honduras and Costa Rica. Both the improvement of these civilian forces and our relationship with them will take some time to develop. Therefore, the military counterterrorism program will assist participating governments to enhance their anti-terrorism defenses now, while the police assistance program will begin to develop a civilian contribution which will eventually replace aspects of the military contribution.

#### RECAP

Under the Military Assistance Program (chapter 2 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act) we are proposing a \$27 million Regional Enhanced Counterterrorism Program (RECAP). RECAP would be a separate and identifiable program in the host countries. It should not be viewed as a supplement to existing military assistance programs. While it will not require the creation of new management staff, DOD has formed an ad hoc management group to assure program effectiveness. It would be implemented by means of the existing Military Assistance Program channels, as a special counterterrorism project within our U.S. military security assistance programs.

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DOD would use its existing facilities and personnel to provide the training and equipment necessary to improve the counterterrorist capabilities of the military forces of the host governments. The funds will be used for training and procurement of counterterrorist military items. We project extensive training and procurement for enhancing the capabilities of the armed forces -- command and control; intelligence; arms interdiction; hostage rescue; night and small unit operations; expanding civil defense operations; and spare parts and sustainment.

#### LECTAP

The counterpart program on the civilian side is the Law Enforcement Counterterrorism Assistance Program, LECTAP. The civilian program will take \$26 million of the requested FY 1986 funds. It will be designed to assist recipient governments to strengthen law enforcement institutions necessary to combat terrorist attacks. It will do so by offering direct police training and equipment assistance. LECTAP assistance will:

-- Encourage the creation and development of modern law enforcement agencies who combine the use of appropriate modern techniques with concern for democratic procedures and human rights safeguards;

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-- Be limited to types of training and equipment appropriate for civilian law enforcement authorities;

-- Be coordinated with other USG programs in the areas of counterinsurgency, anti-terrorism, and drug enforcement; and

-- Be designed to support the process of building democratic institutions by enhancing respect for the rule of law.

A March 1985 Congressional Research Service study of post-war insurgencies emphasized the importance of responsible, competent police forces in successful counterinsurgency and counterterrorism programs. To achieve this objective will require a sustained effort by the USG working in close cooperation with host governments. The absolutely essential first step is a political commitment by the host country regarding the necessity and role of civilian police. The commitment must then be implemented by a serious commitment of people, time, and resources to the program. LECTAP, the Law Enforcement Counterterrorism Assistance Program, will be the channel by which the USG provides the externally required training and equipment resources and helps with the planning for such a program. It also provides a crucial incentive for the local governments to make the serious long-term commitment.

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The gap in USG counterterrorism assistance was noted by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Staff Study Mission on International Terrorism and Diplomatic Security which visited a number of countries in Central and South America in November of last year. The subsequent report on that trip contained a number of constructive observations and recommendations which helped shape our proposal. One key passage was as follows:

"Regarding the training of host government elements involved in protecting diplomatic facilities, in most countries in Latin and Central America, the host government agencies performing such protection are inadequately trained and poorly supplied. It is recommended the Department of State and other pertinent U.S. Government agencies increase their training efforts for host government elements responsible for diplomatic protection. While the USAID Public Safety Program was controversial, the program provided friendly governments' police forces with valuable skills and training which could be used in the protection of our embassies overseas. A careful review should be made regarding the feasibility of providing training to individual police officers of certain countries. Where necessary, existing law should be changed to permit such training in accordance with applicable human rights standards."

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Other passages noted the great interest the countries had in participating in the Department of State's ATA program. We intend to offer ATA training to the eligible countries in Central America, but it must be noted that the ATA is extremely limited: it has only \$5 million for a world-wide program, with over 25 active participating countries, and over 70 eligible.

#### LECTAP PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

LECTAP will be managed by the Department of State in close cooperation with US civilian law enforcement agencies, local as well as federal. Management for the LECTAP program will be provided by the successful Anti-terrorism Assistance Office (ATA). ATA will be integrated into the new Bureau for Diplomatic Security. The Ambassador-at-Large for Combatting Terrorism will provide counterterrorism policy guidance and assure coordination of LECTAP with other relevant programs. The Bureau for Inter-American Affairs will exercise regional political oversight and the Bureau for Humanitarian Affairs and Human Rights will provide human rights and program design guidelines.

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The LECTAP program office will be responsible for:

-- Planning and design of programs to be offered to participating countries;

-- Coordination of the participation of cooperating US federal and local law enforcement authorities;

-- Discussion and negotiation, through our resident diplomatic missions, of individual country programs, with participating governments;

-- Implementation of country programs, including overall oversight evaluation and control of program direction, content and appropriate and effective utilization of resources.

-- Under guidance of the Interdepartmental Group on Terrorism (IG/T) coordination committee, the coordination of LECTAP with other USG programs in participating countries; and

-- Consultation with and reporting to appropriate Congressional committees.



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PROGRAM COORDINATION

I would like to emphasize that we view the new military and civilian programs as two sides of the same coin. They must be carefully coordinated and integrated with existing USG security assistance and anti-terrorism programs. In pursuing the goal of tighter coordination, we are implementing the intention of Congress, as expressed in Section 502 of the International Security and Development Act of 1985. This required coordination will be performed at three levels:

-- The host participating government itself will be charged with designating a central authority responsible for coordinating the planning and management of the relevant civilian law enforcement and military security assistance programs;

-- The US Chief of Mission will be responsible for coordinating all components of the USG assistance efforts, by means of a Country Team Task Force composed of the resident senior representatives of involved agencies; and

-- An interagency working group of the Interdepartmental Group on terrorism (IG/T) will be charged with the overall coordination of USG counterterrorism efforts in the participating countries, as well as seeing that the counterterrorist programs mesh effectively with other progress in the military, economic, social and political fields.

COUNTERTERRORISM PROTECTION FUND

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to describe the third element of the Administration's proposal, the counterterrorism protection fund. It is clear that a successful counterterrorism program requires depriving terrorists of the ability to intimidate. The threat of retaliation permits terrorists to thwart the law enforcement system itself. Therefore, the successful prosecution of terrorists requires willingness of citizens to provide information and to testify in court. This in turn requires a system of protection for witnesses.

When the United States requests individuals to place themselves at risk in the cause of combatting terrorism we incur a moral obligation. We are requesting \$1 million in order to enable us to fulfill this obligation. The requested funds would be allocated to the Secretary of State to enable us to finance protection by appropriate authorities, either local or US, both inside and outside of our own territory. As in the case of the rewards program under existing law, we will work closely with the Department of Justice in establishing appropriate standards and procedures.

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CONCLUSION

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, I wish to reiterate that there is a clear need for additional effort by the United States to combat the serious terrorist threat directed against democratic governments in Central America. This threat is also directed openly against us. The nature of the violence may be changing as is evident in El Salvador, but the objectives remain the same: frustration of the democratic process and imposition of totalitarian regimes.

We are under terrorist attack in many parts of the world. We are wrestling, as Congress is wrestling, with the problem of finding appropriate responses and defenses. We believe that an active counterterrorism program of assistance to civilian police and the military will constitute a positive forward response, a significant contribution to a forward strategy. With such a program, we will no longer be waiting passively but will instead be working actively with our friends in taking preventative measures consistent with our democratic values and our support for democratic development in Central America.

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